Presentation title:

An inclusive education response to identified access and massification concerns in law HEIs

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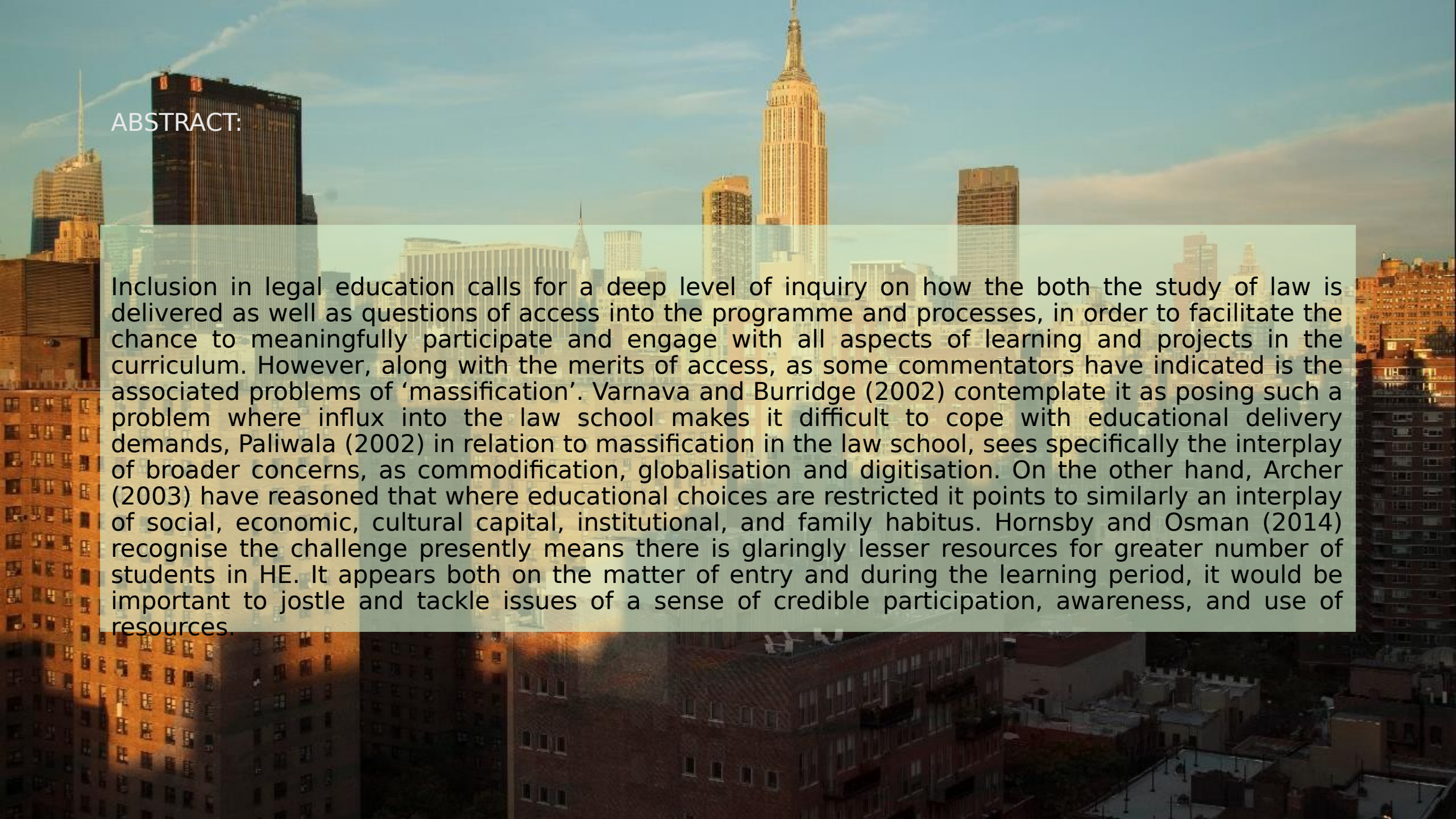
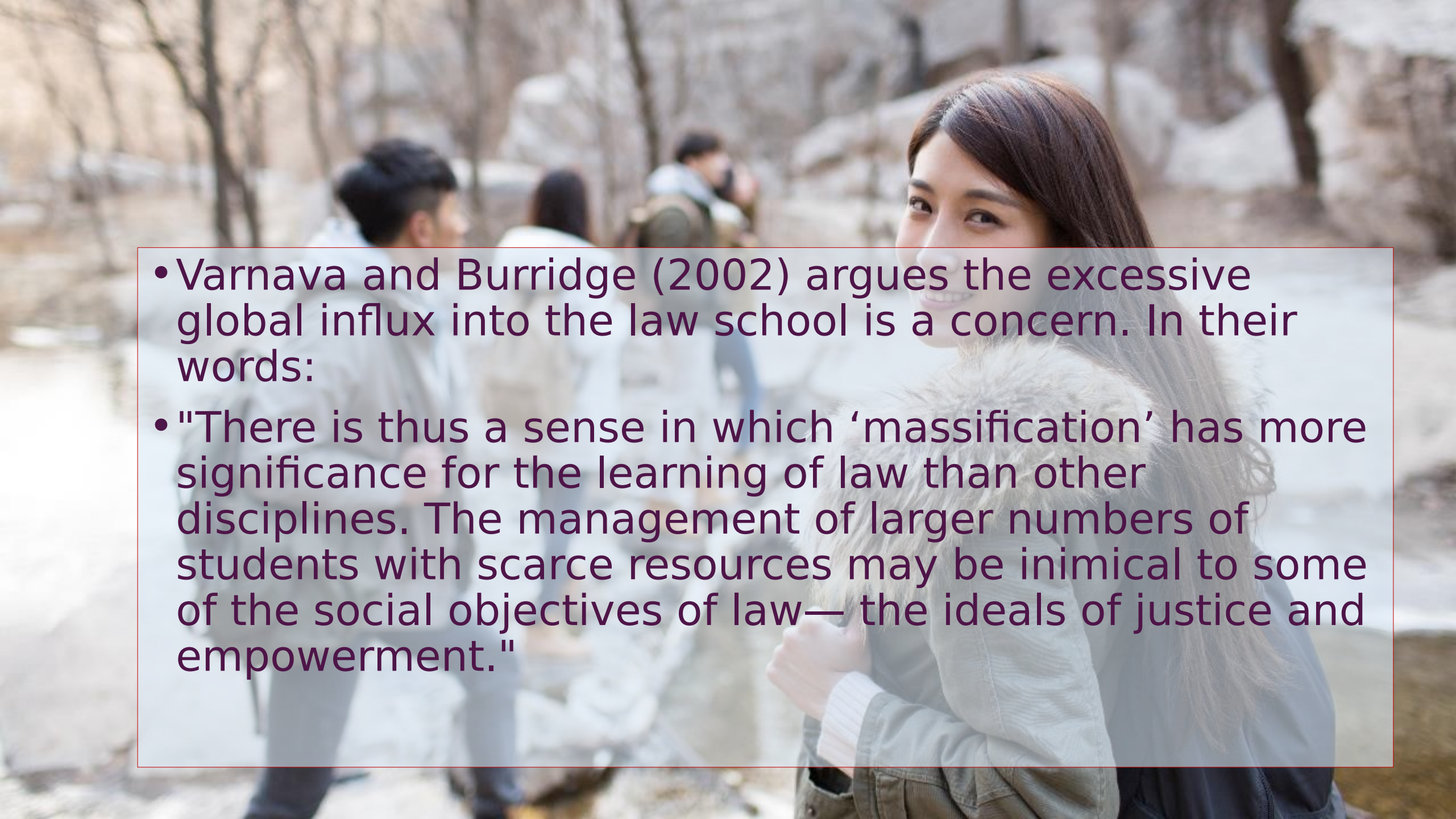


ABSTRACT:

Inclusion in legal education calls for a deep level of inquiry on how the both the study of law is delivered as well as questions of access into the programme and processes, in order to facilitate the chance to meaningfully participate and engage with all aspects of learning and projects in the curriculum. However, along with the merits of access, as some commentators have indicated is the associated problems of ‘massification’. Varnava and Burridge (2002) contemplate it as posing such a problem where influx into the law school makes it difficult to cope with educational delivery demands, Paliwala (2002) in relation to massification in the law school, sees specifically the interplay of broader concerns, as commodification, globalisation and digitisation. On the other hand, Archer (2003) have reasoned that where educational choices are restricted it points to similarly an interplay of social, economic, cultural capital, institutional, and family habitus. Hornsby and Osman (2014) recognise the challenge presently means there is glaringly lesser resources for greater number of students in HE. It appears both on the matter of entry and during the learning period, it would be important to jostle and tackle issues of a sense of credible participation, awareness, and use of resources.



- Varnava and Burridge (2002) argues the excessive global influx into the law school is a concern. In their words:
- "There is thus a sense in which ‘massification’ has more significance for the learning of law than other disciplines. The management of larger numbers of students with scarce resources may be inimical to some of the social objectives of law— the ideals of justice and empowerment."

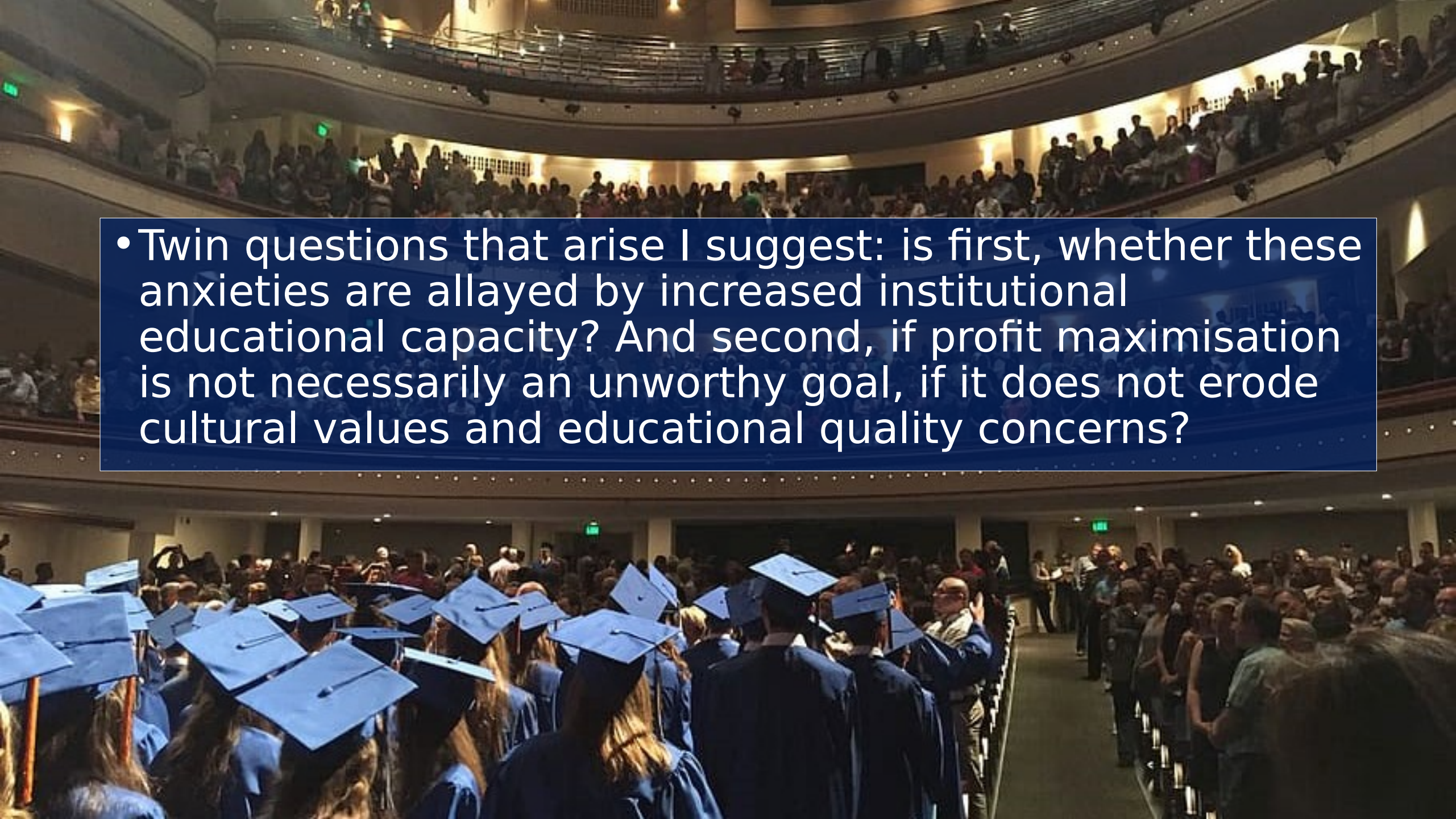
- Paliwala (2002) suggests an interplay of broader concerns, as commodification, globalisation and digitisation. And there is rapid changes occurring in learning spaces.

- Also, warn of a "potential fracture of academic communities"

- *Archer (2003)* another point of interplay of factors (in terms of social, economic, cultural capital, institutional, and family habitus) infers with quality of 'educational choices'. Archer argues the existence of meaningful categorisations or class systems (though 'shifting') that influence decision making on educational opportunities, and appears to suggest that working class families experience greater financial pressures which may affect their access and opportunities. The criticism to be explored Archer argues is “the role of the educational institution itself in creating and perpetuating inequalities."

- However, *Farwell (2002)* points out: “Higher education may have moved towards a mass system in terms of numbers but it still retains features of an elite system that remain embedded in the provision.”

- Hornsby and Osman (2014) highlights a present challenge of lesser resources for a greater number of students. Massification indicates an increase in enrolments in HE, but contrasted with an inability to cope given limited financial and infrastructural support.



- Twin questions that arise I suggest: is first, whether these anxieties are allayed by increased institutional educational capacity? And second, if profit maximisation is not necessarily an unworthy goal, if it does not erode cultural values and educational quality concerns?

Conclusion

- Juxtaposition of arguments: Whilst Paliwala (2002), as well as Varnava and Burridge (2002) raise awareness as to the potential for pressures; Paliwala (2002), and Archer (2003) draw to mind that the challenge in the HE system as to participation do not operate in a vacuum but buttresses the interplay of factors.

- *Recommendations*:

One of which, is that for the law HEIs it's important to be mindful of managing access to increase capacity for law study intake, and for the details of the student profiles that access those opportunities and whether any benefit of crosschecking the extent it reflects changing demographics and intellectual potentialities.

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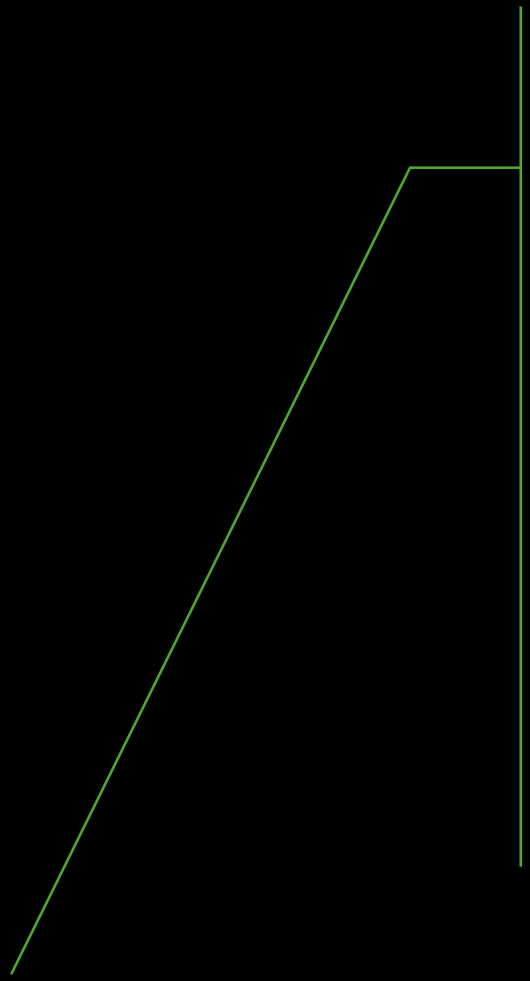

Thanks for participating.

ANY QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS?

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